

PATHHEAD AND WEST END CONGREGATIONAL CHURCHES PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

A way forward

JOINT MEETING OF TRUSTEES, DEACONS AND ELDERS, 22 SEPTEMBER 2016

SUMMARY OF DISCUSSION

Fourteen trustees, deacons and elders (referred to for ease, as “the leaders”), including the minister met together on 22nd September at 7.30pm in the West End Church Hall, there were also five apologies.

It was felt that communication had gone as planned following the last meeting, there haven't been any direct comments about the meeting, but the subject of union between the churches is being discussed amongst members, and this is seen as very positive. Following this meeting the note will be available on the website, and some copies will be available in paper form for those who do not have internet access.

We are broadly running with the timetable outlined previously. Now we are at the stage of needing to work in smaller groups to look at specific areas of the process. Four groups will look at the following areas.

Constitution

Brian Wood will take this work forward, supported by four others, including the minister and the West End secretary. The starting point is the existing constitutions of both churches, and the aim will be to develop a standardized constitution, which can be adopted by each church prior to union, and thereafter be adapted as the constitution for the new church. There is also the need to liaise with OSCR about changes to the constitution(s) and then about the creation of a new charity.

Finance

Stella Allan and Jim Kelly (treasurers) will lead this piece of work, supported by four others, including the minister and the Pathhead secretary. Initially there is the need to map out the current financial situation, and to plan some of the steps needed to bring the finances of both churches together. Some of this work can only be done in principle at this stage, pending the adopting of a new constitution and formal merger of the two churches.

Buildings

It is recognised that this is potentially the most difficult area for us to consider. The minister will lead this piece of work, supported by five or six others. The West End Church survey is complete and the report is available, and the Pathhead survey took place last week, the report will be with us early October. We will also need to consider wider aspects of the churches' work, church locations, where members live etc. as well as wider development plans for Kirkcaldy. Allan Robertson, the surveyor, will be available to us to guide our discussion as required especially as to the condition and of the buildings and potential future development and maintenance costs.

Wider Church Life

The minister will lead this area of work, supported by five or six others. Here the discussion is about what sort of church we wish to become, developing a vision for our future work, what our priorities should be and to consider some of the practical aspects of union (e.g. integrating memberships, leaders, church programmes etc.)

Next Steps

We will plan for church meetings in both churches on 6th November 2016, following a shorter communion service in each. This will give opportunity to update members on the progress to date, as well as to discuss and vote on a formal proposal that each church will actively pursue union with the other.

Prior to this the leaders will meet again on 25th October in the Pathhead Hall, where discussion will be mainly in the smaller groupings to take forward the work outlined above.